



# NEWS

about  
Connecticut  
Women

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## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## CONNECTICUT TEENS POLLED

### *Confident but Perceptions of Choices Limited*

Hartford—The state legislature's Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) released the results of a poll of teen girls and boys today on *Making Women Visible Day*.

The PCSW commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut to conduct a telephone survey of teens, both girls and boys, ages 14 through 17, in Connecticut to gather perceptions on issues and challenges that young women face in their everyday lives. The poll examined the everyday challenges and issues, hopes for the future, and career interests and goals of teens in Connecticut and to note differences in perception between teen girls and boys.

Key findings include the following:

- Connecticut teens are optimistic and confident about their futures. They believe in gender equality related to abilities and career opportunities, unfortunately they believe their choices are limited by attitudes and issues of safety.
- Teens are optimistic and confident about their future—both their education and family life. 95% of teens are confident they will finish high school and get a job. Career interests are varied among the polling sample. And, there is a notable science and technology gap in the interests of males and females. Females show more interest in the arts, and males are more focused on science, business, and

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technology. It is interesting to note that more African American teens plan to get a professional degree than White teens.

Teens believe in gender equality related to opportunities and abilities. For example,

- More than 80% of teens agree that girls and boys are equally good at math and science.
- The vast majority (91%) of teens say that men and women are equally qualified to be president.
- Almost 100% believe in equal pay for equal work for men and women.

Teens believe that women and men can succeed equally at most jobs, yet attitudes and discrimination limit their choices.

- Notably, more females (54%) than males (45%) believe that attitudes or discrimination limit their career choices. **More than half of young women polled believe that attitudes or discrimination limit their career choices.**
- More males (26%) than females (16%) believe that there are some jobs that are more appropriate based on gender.

Over half (53%) of girls say going to a safer school would make their lives better. Notably, 63% of African American girls say this.

**School, family, and body image are viewed as problems for teen girls, although the majority are confident in their looks and do not aspire to look like celebrities.** More males (23%) than females (8%) view body image as a problem for teenage girls.

Adults play an important role in the lives of teenagers.

- Almost 3 in 10 teenagers (28%) believe that spending more time with a parent or other adult would improve their lives “a great deal.” An additional 41% feel more adult time would “somewhat” improve their lives.
- Teens feel they could talk to adults about issues in their lives, including
  - School (24%)
  - Their future (20%)
  - General life problems and feelings (19%)

The Executive Summary is available by calling the PCSW at 860-240-8300 or by visiting their website at [www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw](http://www.cga.ct.gov/pcsw).

The PCSW was established by the CT General Assembly in 1973. The Commission studies all matters concerning women, informs leaders about the nature and scope of discrimination, serves as a liaison between government and private interest groups concerned with services for women, promotes consideration of women for governmental positions and works with state agencies to access programs and practices as they affect women.